

The Irish Pony Club A test

2022

Disc Colour: Pale Blue

(Honours: Navy Blue)

Candidate Requirements:

- Candidates must have passed their Lungeing and H test.
- Candidates must bring two horses to the A test, one for the jumping section, both show jumping and cross-country, one for the flatwork section (details outlined below).
- All horses must be suitable to be shared with other candidates.
- Candidates must be in their 18th year to sit their A test.

Outcomes:

Candidates should understand and apply the Scales of Training and show a secure, balanced, independent position, on the flat and over fences.

Candidates should show a consistent, allowing contact and demonstrate effective use of the aids.

Format:

Candidates are required to bring two suitable horses to the assessment – one for show jumping and cross-country and one for flatwork.

Horses must be capable of jumping up to 1.10m for the show jumping and cross-country and be working at Elementary level dressage. Horses must have their own suitable tack and be suitable to be ridden by other candidates. No green horses or stallions allowed.

Candidates are advised to arrive early and to walk the show jumping and cross-country courses.

The assessment will consist of three sessions, details are outlined below.

Candidates should wear cross country attire for both show jumping and cross-country sessions. The cross country and show jumping will take out place outside.

For the flat work session half of the horses will be in snaffles and half will be in double bridles. The arena will be 20m X 60m.

Candidates should wear jacket, shirt and tie as for competition for the flat work session.

Section A

Show Jumping:

- Show a correct, secure, balanced and independent position, and set stirrups a suitable length.
- Demonstrate light seat and show jumping position
- Work the horses in a logical and progressive manner
- Show a good quality canter, suitable for 1.10m course
- Ride a course of show jumps, showing correct rhythm, confidence, appropriate canter, good use of arena and feel for the horse
- Discuss appropriate work for progressive development
- Maintain a regular, fluent rhythm.
- Present the horse to the fence in a way that allows him to jump easily.
- Have a clear knowledge of distances, all in meters.
- Accurately assess and comment on the rounds, horses and have a plan to improve the horse and further his education.
- Candidates will ride 2 or 3 horses at the discretion of the assessors.

Section B

Cross Country:

- Show a balanced, effective position over undulating ground
- Show a regular rhythm between the fences, appropriate to ground and weather conditions
- Demonstrate correct cross-country position, with a secure lower leg, showing an ability to slip the reins if required
- Ride in accordance with age and stage of training of the horse.
- Have a knowledge cross-country speeds (in meters per minute) for 1m and 1.10m courses
- Know how to ride a variety of cross-country fences including; up and down banks, drops, water, ditches, skinny's corner fences etc.
- Accurately assess the horse's cross country and have a plan to improve them
- Candidates will ride 2 or 3 horses at the discretion of the assessors

Section C

Flatwork:

- Progressively work the horses in line with the Scales of Training
- Show an independent seat, secure leg, balanced position and maintain an allowing, correct contact
- Ride horses in a forward, balanced way, with suppleness and engagement
- Accurately assess each horse and demonstrate specific exercises to show improvement
- Be aware of flexion in the poll and bend in the body
- Have a clear knowledge of the aids for all the required movements
- Have a clear understanding of the Half Halt and when to use it
- Ride a variety of correct school movement including:
 - Circles and half circles 20m, 15m, 10m
 - Shallow loops and serpentines
 - Progressive and direct transitions
 - Transitions within the pace.
 - Medium walk and free walk on a long rein
 - Working trot and medium trot
 - Allowing the horse to stretch forward and down in trot
 - Working and medium canter
 - Give and retake the reins in canter
 - Simple change
 - Halt
 - Rein back
 - Counter canter
 - Demi pirouette in walk
 - Leg yielding
 - Shoulder in

Training the Young Horse:

Throughout the three sections outlined above candidates will be asked to discuss and show their knowledge on the production and training of young horses. Topics to be covered include:

- Knowledge of handling young stock
- The advantages of training aids (Eg: Lungeing, Long Reining)
- Introducing the young horse to tack
- A safe and suitable backing process
- A safe and suitable initial riding plan
- Introduction to jumping
- The pros and cons of hunting
- Introducing the horse to cross-country fences
- Maintenance of arenas
- Maintenance of equipment
- Understand the safety implications in relation to helpers and other animals
- Pros and cons to hacking out
- How to deal with problems which can occur while hacking out
- Plan for the first year of work in line with the Scales of Training
- Conformation, how it effects the way of going and career prospects